

**Statement on Signing the
Henry J. Hyde United States-India
Peaceful Atomic Energy
Cooperation Act of 2006**

December 18, 2006

Today I have signed into law H.R. 5682, an Act containing the “Henry J. Hyde United States-India Peaceful Atomic Energy Cooperation Act of 2006.” The Act will strengthen the strategic relationship between the United States and India and deliver valuable benefits to both nations.

Section 103 of the Act purports to establish U.S. policy with respect to various international affairs matters. My approval of the Act does not constitute my adoption of the statements of policy as U.S. foreign policy. Given the Constitution’s commitment to the presidency of the authority to conduct the Nation’s foreign affairs, the executive branch shall construe such policy statements as advisory. Also, if section 104(d)(2) of the Act were construed to prohibit the executive branch from transferring or approving the transfer of an item to India contrary to Nuclear Suppliers Group transfer guidelines that may be in effect at the time of such future transfer, a serious question would exist as to whether the provision unconstitutionally delegated legislative power to an international body. In order to avoid this constitutional question, the executive branch shall construe section 104(d)(2) as advisory. The executive branch will give sections 103 and 104(d)(2) the due weight that comity between the legislative and executive branches should require, to the extent consistent with U.S. foreign policy.

The executive branch shall construe provisions of the Act that mandate, regulate, or prohibit submission of information to the Congress, an international organization, or the public, such as sections 104, 109, 261, 271, 272, 273, 274, and 275, in a manner consistent with the President’s constitutional authority to protect and control information that could impair foreign relations, national security, the deliberative processes of the Ex-

ecutive, or the performance of the Executive’s constitutional duties.

George W. Bush

The White House,
December 18, 2006.

NOTE: H.R. 5682, approved December 18, was assigned Public Law No. 109–401. An original was not available for verification of the content of this statement.

**Remarks at a Swearing-In Ceremony
for Robert M. Gates as Secretary of
Defense in Arlington, Virginia**

December 18, 2006

Thank you all. I’m pleased to join you here at the Pentagon. We’re here to congratulate Bob Gates on becoming our Nation’s 22d Secretary of the Defense.

Bob Gates entered public service 40 years ago. He is an experienced and thoughtful leader. He has got a track record of steering large organizations through change and transformation. I know Bob Gates will be an outstanding Secretary of the Defense.

I want to thank Bob’s wife, Becky, and their family and their many friends who are with us here today. I appreciate the fact that the Vice President is here to administer the oath. I want to thank the members of my Cabinet who have joined us in welcoming a new member to the Cabinet. I appreciate so very much Senator John Warner and Senator Carl Levin for joining us. I thank the other Members of the United States Congress who are with us today, not the least of whom is my Congressman, Chet Edwards, from central Texas. *[Laughter]* I suspect he’s here because of the Texas A&M connection. *[Laughter]*

I want to thank Deputy Secretary England for joining us. I thank Dr. Harvey and Dr. Winter and Michael Wynne, Secretaries of the Army, Navy, and Air Force, for joining us here today. I appreciate so very much General Pete Pace, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs, and his wife, Lynne, as well as the other members of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. I thank our distinguished guests.

Most importantly, I thank those who wear our uniform. This has got to be an exciting

time for Bob Gates. I can't tell you what an honor it is to be the Commander in Chief of unbelievably fine people, and I suspect he will share that same sense of enthusiasm as the Secretary of the Defense.

The job of Secretary of Defense is one of the most important positions in our Government. The Secretary must understand the challenges of the present and see the threats of the future and find the best ways to prepare our Armed Forces to meet them.

We are a nation at war. And I rely on our Secretary of Defense to provide me with the best possible advice and to help direct our Nation's Armed Forces as they engage the enemies of freedom around the world. Bob Gates is the right man to take on these challenges. He'll be an outstanding leader for our men and women in uniform, and he's going to make our Nation proud.

Bob is a man of vision, integrity, and extensive experience. In 1966, Bob began his rise from an entry-level position at the Central Intelligence Agency to become its director. During his years of public service, Bob Gates has worked under six Presidents from both parties. He spent nearly 9 years at the White House working on the National Security Council staff. He's amassed nearly 30 years of experience in national security matters. Bob Gates's lifetime of preparation will serve him well as the Secretary of Defense.

Bob follows a superb leader at the Department of Defense. For nearly 6 years, Don Rumsfeld has served with exceptional strength and energy at a time of challenge and change, and he produced impressive results. During his tenure, he developed a new defense strategy, established a new command structure of our Armed Forces, helped transform the NATO Alliance, took ballistic missile defense from theory to reality, and undertook the most sweeping transformation of America's global defense posture since the start of the cold war. He led our Armed Forces with determination and distinction. And on Friday at the Pentagon, the men and women he led showed their admiration and devotion to him. I want to thank Don Rumsfeld for his service, and I wish him and his family all the very best.

As Bob Gates raises his hand and takes the oath of office, he does so at a time of

great consequence for our Nation. He knows the stakes in the war on terror. He recognizes this is a long struggle against an enemy unlike any our Nation has fought before. He understands that defeating the terrorists and the radicals and the extremists in Iraq and the Middle East is essential to leading toward peace.

As Secretary of Defense, he will help our country forge a new way forward in Iraq so that we can help the Iraqis achieve our shared goal of a unified democratic Iraq that can govern itself, sustain itself, and defend itself and be an ally in our struggle against extremists and radicals.

Bob Gates is a talented and innovative leader who brings a fresh perspective to the Department of Defense. I'm pleased that he's answered the call to serve our Nation again. He has my trust and my confidence, and he has the gratitude and the prayers of the American people.

And so I look forward to working with Bob Gates. I congratulate you, sir. I appreciate you taking on this job. And now I'm going to ask the Vice President to administer the oath of office for our Nation's 22d Secretary of Defense.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:22 p.m. at the Pentagon. The transcript released by the Office of the Press Secretary also included the remarks of Secretary of Defense Gates. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of these remarks.

Remarks on Lighting the Hanukkah Menorah

December 18, 2006

Thank you all very much. Welcome to the White House. I'm pleased you all could join us. I appreciate members of my Cabinet who have joined us: Secretary Michael Chertoff, Ambassador Susan Schwab, and Chief of Staff Joshua Bolten.

Tonight is the fourth night of Hanukkah, a holiday which commemorates a victory for freedom and the courage and faith that made it possible. Laura and I are honored to have this Hanukkah menorah here at the White House. It's a symbol that the White House